

Exide Technologies Lead Battery Recycling Facility – Vernon, CA

6/5/14 Deliberative - Attorney/Client Privileged

Background/Status:

- On May 22, 2014 EPA issued a Notice of Violation to Exide Technologies for excessive lead emissions from its lead smelting facility. EPA's investigation, prompted by community concerns as well as ongoing investigations by state and local agencies, found that Exide violated the Clean Air Act's lead emissions standards on more than 30 occasions since September 2013.
- Under California's SIP (SCAQMD Rule 1420.1), large lead-acid battery recycling facilities are prohibited from emitting lead into the air that exceeds $0.15\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (micrograms per meter cubed) over any period of 30 consecutive days. Any violation of the SIP is a violation of the federal Clean Air Act.
- Exide Technologies is a battery recycling facility located at 2700 South Indiana Avenue in Vernon and has been in operation since 1922. Exide recovers lead from recycled automotive batteries and other lead-bearing scrap materials and recycles 23,000 to 41,000 batteries daily. The City of Vernon is an industrial city of 5.2 square miles located approximately two miles from homes and schools in the neighboring City of Maywood.
- California's Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) have aggressive pursued all compliance and enforcement options to limit or reduce harmful emissions at Exide, and we're working closely with each agency to ensure all federally-enforceable rules and requirements are met.

SCAQMD Actions:

- In January 2014, SCAQMD amended existing Rule 1420.1 (which already imposes strict controls for lead emissions) to require Exide and Quemetco to meet strict emission limits for arsenic, benzene and 1,3-butadiene.
- SCAQMD has pursued several enforcement actions against Exide, including an October 2013 Order of Abatement which would require Exide to shutter its facility until appropriate emission controls are in place. A final decision by the SCAQMD Hearing Board on the Order of Abatement is expected in June 2014.

Next Steps (Deliberative - Attorney/Client Privileged)

- Exide responded to the Notice of Violation by requesting a meeting in July 2014 to discuss compliance options.
- EPA plans to issue an Information Request (CAA§114) to determine whether the Exide Facility is in compliance with SCAQMD Rule 1420.1, NESHAP Subpart X, and other requirements of the federal Clean Air Act.

Key Points

- The community and local elected officials remain concerned with the potential harmful effects of excessive lead emissions from the Exide facility, and we're reaching out to

several community leaders to improve public awareness of EPA's role in addressing these public health concerns.

- EPA and SCAQMD are working closely with state and local agencies to ensure Exide complies with all environmental rules and regulations.

Contact

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